

What Makes Podiatry Unique?

BY BARRY H. BLOCK, DPM, JD

What defines a medical specialty? For dermatologists, it's the skin. For orthopedic surgeons, it's bone surgery. Podiatrists can also treat dermatologic conditions and perform surgery of the feet and ankles. This begs the question, "what makes podiatrists unique?" The obvious answer is that we combine biomechanics with these specializations. Thus, orthopedists can perform hallux valgus surgery, but can do little to prevent the bunion from returning. Dermatologists can diagnose an IPK, but cannot properly treat one or prevent its recurrence.



Thanks to the work of podiatric biomechanics pioneers such as Drs. Merton Root and Richard Schuster, among others, podiatrists have been taught the structural basis that is an intrinsic part of the etiology of most foot and ankle conditions we treat. Studies have shown that heel pain, one of the most common pedal symptoms, can be effectively treated in over 85% of cases through the use of orthotics. Even in recalcitrant cases where surgery is indicated, orthotics can prevent recurrence.

While podiatrists' greatest advances in the past few decades have been in the implementation of 3-year residencies, the fact remains that most patients who frequent podiatric offices do not come for surgery, but rather for treatment of heel pain, onychomycosis, ingrown toenails, corns and calluses, bunions, hammertoes, athlete's foot, and warts. Those DPMs who complete a 3-year residency and expect to make a living doing foot and ankle surgery are in for a rude awakening.

The articles in this special *Biomechanics and Orthotics* issue should remind all podiatrists of what your forte is. Those who choose to ignore this reality do so at their own risk.

Respectfully Submitted,

Barry H. Block D.P.M.

Barry H. Block, DPM, JD, Editor-in-Chief
bblock@podiatrym.com

Visit us on Facebook



Dedicated to Practice Growth and Prosperity Since 1982

Volume 40, Number 7

- Publisher: Scott C. Borowsky, 610-645-6950
- Editor-in-Chief: Barry H. Block, DPM, JD, 718-897-9700
- Managing Editor: Hermine S. Block, MS
- Desktop Publishing & Graphic Design: Stephanie Kloos Donoghue, stephkloos@optonline.net
- Senior Editor: Marc I. Haspel, DPM
- Director of Continuing Medical Education: David George, DPM
- Consulting Editors: David G. Armstrong, DPM; John Bergmann, DPM; Nicholas Bevilacqua, DPM; Michael Brody, DPM; G. Dock Dockery, DPM; Robert Frykberg, DPM; Alison J. Garten, DPM; Lynn Homisak, PRT; Jon Hultman, DPM, MBA; Warren S. Joseph, DPM; Stanley Kalish, DPM; Jeffrey D. Lehrman, DPM; Hal Ornstein, DPM; Kenneth Rehm, DPM; Doug Richie, DPM; Jeffrey Robbins, DPM; Lee Rogers, DPM; Robert J. Snyder, DPM
- Advertising: David Kagan, Associate Publisher, 1062 E. Lancaster Ave., Rosemont Plaza, Ste. 15F, Bryn Mawr, PA 19010, 215-808-0770 (m)
- Controller: Joseph W. Mellek, 610-645-6944, accounting@kanec.com
- Circulation: Susan Mease

PODIATRY MANAGEMENT

1062 E. Lancaster Ave.
Rosemont Plaza, Ste. 15F
Bryn Mawr, PA 19010
(610) 645-6940
FAX: (610) 645-6943

E-mail: podiatrym@kanec.com

Website:
podiatrym.com

Copyright © 2021 and published by Kane Communications, Inc. at 1062 E. Lancaster Ave., Rosemont Plaza, Ste. 15F, Bryn Mawr, PA 19010 in the U.S. All rights reserved. No part of this periodical may be reproduced without the consent of Kane Communications, Inc. All material subject to this copyright may be photocopied for the non-commercial purpose of scientific or educational advancement. Printed in U.S.A.

Periodicals postage paid at Bryn Mawr, PA 19010 and additional entry.

Send Manuscripts and Letters to: bblock@podiatrym.com

Acceptance and publication by this magazine of an advertisement, news story, or product information does not imply endorsement or approval of the company, product, or service by this magazine or Kane Communications, Inc.